

THE LATEST BLUNDER OF NICHOLAS II.

"It is worse than a crime—it is a blunder," was the saying of the wittiest and the most subtle of French statesmen. The dissolution of the Douma by ukase of the Czar is admitted by all to have been such a blunder. The most thorough-faced Socialist writers, and the calmest and most scientific historical and political specialists, admit the same thing. Even the moderates of the Douma as represented by Heyden and Stakhovitch did not hesitate to avow that Nicholas had acted quite within his constitutional rights in dissolving a body whom he charged with "straying into spheres beyond their competence" and "making comments" upon the imperfections of the Fundamental Laws. Yet, as Mr. Paul Leroy-Beaulieu says in the Paris *Economiste Français*, "we must not lay it to his charge as a crime." It was a blunder because of its futility, declares the Socialist *Neue Gesellschaft* (Berlin), and gives the following reasons:

"The ukase of a weakling has wiped out the first parliament of Russia, but that ukase can not crush the forces which this parliament has called to life. It can not wipe out the memories which survive the last three years of Russian history. You may dissolve a parliament, but not a revolution. The deeds which have distinguished a revolution are the permanent possessions of a people. If the Czar has destroyed the Douma, it is not improbable that he has also destroyed the monarchy and the Romanoff dynasty: time will show. But he has not set the Russian constitution into permanent abeyance. A state which has once left the path of absolutism can never again return to it."

Mr. Leroy-Beaulieu is a deep student of Russian affairs. In the article above quoted he expresses his conviction that "it certainly seemed to be a simpler and cleverer course for the Czar to have set up a new prime minister, and offered that post to Mr. Mouroumtseff, the president of the Douma, of whom all parties thought and spoke well, and to have required that statesman to formulate a detailed program of his future policy. If the program he gave proved unacceptable the czar should have suspended or prorogued the Russian parliament, never have dissolved it."

The appointment of Mouroumtseff as premier is advocated also by the London Times, which thinks that the czar should have had patience with the Douma until its members had realized their plan of a constitutional assembly. To quote:

"It was their purpose—prematurely attempted, but legitimate in conception—to establish popular government under a limited monarchy on the English model. By every rule of patriotic statecraft and self-preservation, the crown in Russia was bound to see that fair play should be given to their orderly and pacific movement. Had the czar insisted on sending Mr. Goremykin into the retirement which he craved, and replacing him with Mr. Mouroumtseff, or some other capable representative of the majority in the Douma, he could probably have kept the revolutionaries in check without resorting to the military and the secret police. If the worst had come to the worst, and he had been compelled to employ force against civic violence he would have had behind him the moral and material support of all the moderate-minded men in the empire. The best he can now expect is that the reformers will stand aside while

the struggle between Authority and Revolution is fought out to the bitter end."

What the fight "to the bitter end" precipitated by the fatal ukase of Nicholas II. may turn out to be is enlarged upon in a communication to the above-quoted London daily by Mr. MacKenzie Wallace, the greatest living European specialist on Russian history and politics. After discussing the mistakes made on both sides, he advances the following predictions:

"A time of internal ferment, compared with which all the disorder, pillaging, and assassination of the past months will have the appearance of public order, lies before this unhappy country. During that period the liberal sentiment of patriotic Russians will be put to a still severer test. Yet they will unite against the wantonly destructive terrorism to which Russia is meantime doomed, and, putting factions, chimerical schemes, and unnatural alliances, will address themselves to the solution of the complex problem which now confronts this state, namely, the struggle between democratic and monarchial ideas in government, the role of the sovereign in parliamentary regime, and the relation of ministerial responsibility to the parliamentary system." — Translations made for The Literary Digest.

MAY MAKE TYPES OF LIFE.

Factories for the Production of Animals Among the Future Accomplishments.

Animal factories may be an industry in future civilizations. Prof. Wilhelm Ostwald, of the University of Leipzig, believes that by slow development science may even create a type of life as high as that of our domestic cats and dogs. Of course at first man will be able to produce only a piece of protoplasm, something like the water hydra or the resemblance of the sea urchin Prof. Jacques Loeb, of the University of California, has evolved; but it will be instinct with real life and it will be a step to the new evolution. This evolution can only result in the creation of something the equal of the higher animals, but what it will be who can say?

It seems to the professor that the scientist who will be able to do this will be able to determine the physical form of his creation after the development has started and he will have created a new order of life, for this being will multiply in its own form indefinitely, just the same as all our modern animals.

"I am not a biologist; I am merely a chemist. I cannot say whether this creation will be crustacean, amphibian, mammalian, or whether biped, quadruped, fish, fowl, or reptile; I know that by inorganic processes organic being can be produced, and future generations may be furnished with a living object lesson in the doctrine of evolution. Who knows but a new order of humanity may be created? A living thing is nothing but a system of energy and life—it is but a matter of chemistry."

The Blessing of Poverty.

The social reformer, after ordering a soda, addressed the shabby individual at the bar. "Ah, my friend," he said, "are you not aware that strong drink biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder?" The other held up his glass to the light. "This don't, friend," he said. "This is only cheap, watered stuff. I can't afford to buy the kind you refer to."

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